

Message Text

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PAGE 01 VIENNA 09995 051313Z

46

ACTION ACDA-19

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

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P R 051232Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY VIENNA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 850

SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

INFO USMISSION NATO

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AMEMBASSY LONDON

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S E C R E T VIENNA 9995

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR NEGOTIATIONS: DISCUSSION OF TACTICS WITH BELGIAN REP

MBFR NEGOTIATIONS FROM U.S. REP MBFR

1. IN CONVERSATION WITH U.S. REPS SUBSEQUENT TO THE
DECEMBER 4 AD HOC SESSION, BELGIAN REP SAID HE
BELIEVED KHLESTOV'S REMARKS HE HAD JUST REPORTED
(VIENNA 9982) PROVIDED FURTHER INDICATION OF EMERGING
SOVIET READINESS TO BEGIN DETAILED PHASE OF NEGOTIATIONS
WITH TREATMENT OF U.S.-SOVIET REDUCTIONS PROVIDED ALLIES
GAVE KHLESTOV AND SOVIETS SOME BASIS, PERHAPS IN FORM
OF A GENERAL SCHEDULE FOR THE AGREEMENTS COVERING THE
TWO PHASES, TO SHOW THAT BREZHNEV TIMETABLE FOR NEGOTIATIONS
WAS BEING FULFILLED. HE HIMSELF SAW NO HARM IN SUCH
A PROCEDURE. U.S. REPS SAID THEY THOUGHT IT UNWISE
FOR ALLIES TO PLACE THEMSELVES UNDER TIME PRESSURE.

SECRET

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PAGE 02 VIENNA 09995 051313Z

BELGIAN REP AGREED, BUT SAID ALLIES SHOULD GIVE THE

SOVIETS SOMETHING VISIBLE TO SHOW IF THEY PROVE WILLING TO DEPART FROM THEIR CONCEPT THAT ALL FORCES BE INVOLVED FROM OUTSET. ALLIES SHOULD IN ANY EVENT GIVE SOVIETS INFORMAL ENCOURAGEMENT TO CONTINUE DEVELOPING THEIR THINKING IN THIS DIRECTION.

2. BELGIAN REP COMMENTED ON MILDNESS OF EASTERN REACTION TO ALLIED CONCEPT OF FOCUS ON U.S.-SOVIET FORCES IN A FIRST PHASE NOT ONLY IN KHLESTOV'S REMARKS, BUT ALSO IN REMARKS TO HIM OF SOVIET AMBASSADOR TO BRUSSELS AND EAST GERMAN FOREIGN MINISTER WINZER DURING LATTER'S RECENT VISIT TO BELGIUM. HE BELIEVED THIS WAS FURTHER INDICATOR THAT SOVIETS COULD BE PERSUADED TO AGREE TO FOCUS ON U.S.-SOVIET FORCES.

3. U.S. REPS SAID THEY BELIEVED NOW THAT ALLIES HAD PUT FORWARD THEIR FRAMEWORK PROPOSAL AS FORESEEN IN PARA 50 OF AGREED NATO PAPER, THEY SHOULD MOVE TO NEXT STEP, ALSO FORESEEN IN NATO PAPER, OF BEGINNING MORE DETAILED DISCUSSION OF THE COMPONENTS OF THEIR FRAMEWORK PROPOSAL. THE OPEN QUESTION WAS AT WHAT POINT THIS DETAILED DISCUSSION SHOULD BEGIN. AS A PRACTICAL MATTER, IT DID NOT APPEAR THAT ALLIANCE WOULD BE READY WITH STABILIZING MEASURES IN TIME. STABILIZING MEASURES IN ANY EVENT WERE UNFAVORABLE TERRAIN FOR BRINGING EAST TO NEGOTIATE ON GROUNDS OF ALLIES RATHER THAN EASTERN PROPOSAL SINCE THEY RAISED CENTRAL ISSUES OF RESTRICTING FOCUS TO GROUND FORCES AND POSSIBLY ALSO TO U.S. AND SOVIET FORCES IN A CONTEXT WHICH HAD NEGATIVE CONNOTATIONS FOR THE SOVIETS. BEGINNING WITH COMMON CEILING HAD WEAKNESS THAT IT RAISED FROM OUTSET INCLUSION OF EUROPEAN NATIONAL FORCES AND CREATED OPENING FOR EAST TO BRING IN AIR AND NUCLEAR FORCES. TO BEGIN WITH FOCUS ON GROUND FORCES HAD SHORTCOMING OF NOT EXCLUDING EUROPEAN NATIONAL FORCES FROM OUTSET AND OF REQUIRING ABSTRACT ARGUMENTATION DIFFICULT TO SUSTAIN FOR PURPOSES OF GETTING FIRST ENTERING STEP ONTO ALLIED GROUND. MOST FAVORABLE SEQUENCE

SECRET

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PAGE 03 VIENNA 09995 051313Z

FROM TACTICAL VIEWPOINT WAS PERHAPS TO BEGIN WITH U.S.-SOVIET FORCE THEME, THEN MOVE TO GROUND FORCES, THEN, WITH THE THEME OF U.S.-SOVIET GROUND FORCE REDUCTIONS ONCE FIRMLY SEATED, TO WEAVE IN COMMON CEILING AND STABILIZATION MEASURES THEMES.

4. BELGAIN REP SAID HE FOUND THIS APPROACH LOGICAL AND PERSUASIVE AND WOULD BE WILLING TO FOLLOW IT.

HE THOUGHT ALLIES SHOULD LET SOVIET THINKING ON
QUESTION OF PHASING DEVELOP DURING MID-DECEMBER
BREAK AND SEE WHETHER SOVIETS HAD ANYTHING NEW TO
SAY ON IT FOLLOWING BREAK. SOVIETS COULD BE GIVEN
SOME MILD INFORMAL ENCOURAGEMENT IN BILATERALS BY
ALLIES WITHOUT COMMITMENT BY LATTER TO EFFECT
THAT IT WAS NATURAL TO DEAL MORE SPECIFICALLY WITH
LINK BETWEEN PHASES DURING COURSE OF NEGOTIATION
AND PERHAPS FIXED DATE FOR SECOND PHASE COULD THEN
BE SET. U.S. REP COMMENTED THAT BEST APPROACH MIGHT
BE TO ASK SOVIETS TO MAKE SMALL STEP AT OUTSET AND
TO GIVE SMALLEST POSSIBLE SATISFACTION IN RETURN.HUMES

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